

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough examination of this application and the continued indication that claim 4 contains allowable subject matter. Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to clearly define over the applied reference. In this regard, claim 1 is amended to replace the limitation of "directly contacting" with "the third plate directly and conformally contacting the first plate along a substantial portion of the third plate and." As described below, this clearly defines the claim over the cited reference. Also, in claim 3, the term "corresponding" is replaced by the term "aligned with".

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-3 and 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Mai (US 6,871,979). The Office Action stated that the first and third plates of Mai satisfied the limitation of "directly contacting" as those plates were "directly contacting ... where they meet and are fused." According to the amended language of claim 1, however, the claimed embodiments expressly require "the third plate directly and conformally contacting the first plate along a substantial portion of the third plate and the first plate." This claimed feature clearly defines over the teachings of Mai. For at least this reason, claim 1 (as amended) patently defines over the cited art and the rejection should be withdrawn.

As all remaining claims depend from claim 1, the rejections of those claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this Amendment and Response to Office Action. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

By:



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